



Your business
is our business.

REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

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Greenbelt, Maryland 20770
phone: 301-459-7590, fax: 301-577-5575
internet: www.jsitel.com, e-mail: jsi@jsitel.com

October 15, 2013

By Hand Delivery

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: WC Docket No. 10-90, WC Docket No. 11-42
2013 ETC Annual Report of Alma Telephone Company
Study Area Code 220344**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of Alma Telephone Company “Alma”, JSI files the attached confidential and redacted versions of the FCC Form 481 ETC annual reporting information pursuant to sections 54.313 and 54.422 of the Commission’s rules.¹ Alma seeks confidential treatment under Protective Order for section 54.313(f)(2) financial information.² The redacted version is also being filed this date via the FCC’s Electronic Comment Filing System.

Please direct any questions regarding the filing to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

John Kuykendall
JSI Vice President
301-459-7590
jkuykendall@jsitel.com

cc: Charles Tyler, Telecommunications Access Policy Division (two copies, confidential)

¹ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313, 54.422.

² *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Protective Order, DA 12-1857 rel. Nov. 16, 2012 (Protective Order). 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(f)(2).

**FCC Form 481 - Carrier Annual Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
July 2013

<010> Study Area Code	220344
<015> Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020> Program Year	2014
<030> Contact Name: Person USAC should contact with questions about this data	Laure Cohen
<035> Contact Telephone Number: Number of the person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039> Contact Email Address: Email of the person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

ANNUAL REPORTING FOR ALL CARRIERS			54.313 Completion Required	54.422 Completion Required
(check box when complete)				
<100> Service Quality Improvement Reporting	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<200> Outage Reporting (voice)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<210> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <-- check box if no outages to report				
<300> Unfulfilled Service Requests (voice)	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<310> Detail on Attempts (voice)	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<320> Unfulfilled Service Requests (broadband)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<330> Detail on Attempts (broadband)	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<400> Number of Complaints per 1,000 customers (voice)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<410> Fixed	<input type="text" value="1.8E-4"/>			
<420> Mobile				
<430> Number of Complaints per 1,000 customers (broadband)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<440> Fixed				
<450> Mobile				
<500> Service Quality Standards & Consumer Protection Rules Compliance	(check to indicate certification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<510> <input type="text" value="220344GA510"/>	(attached descriptive document)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<600> Functionality in Emergency Situations	(check to indicate certification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<610> <input type="text" value="220344GA610"/>	(attached descriptive document)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<700> Company Price Offerings (voice)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<710> Company Price Offerings (broadband)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<800> Operating Companies and Affiliates	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<900> Tribal Land Offerings (Y/N)? <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	(if yes, complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<1000> Voice Services Rate Comparability	(check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<1010> <input type="text"/>	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<1100> Terrestrial Backhaul (Y/N)? <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	(if not, check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<1110>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<1200> Terms and Condition for Lifeline Customers	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Price Cap Carriers, Proceed to Price Cap Additional Documentation Worksheet

Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers

<2000>	(check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<2005>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rate of Return Carriers, Proceed to ROR Additional Documentation Worksheet

<3000>	(check to indicate certification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<3005>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**(100) Service Quality Improvement Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net
<110>	Has your company received its ETC certification from the FCC?	(yes / no) <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>
	If your answer to Line <110> is yes, do you have an existing §54.202(a) "5	
<111>	year plan" filed with the FCC?	(yes / no) <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

If your answer to Line <111> is yes, then you are required to file a progress report, on line <112> delineating the status of your company's existing § 54.202(a) "5 year plan" on file with the FCC, as it relates to your provision of voice telephony service.

<112> Attach Five-Year Service Quality Improvement Plan or, in subsequent years, your annual progress report filed pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1). If your company is a CETC which only receives frozen support, your progress report is only required to address voice telephony service.

Name of Attached Document (.pdf)

Please check these boxes below to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 112, contains a progress report on its five-year service quality improvement plan pursuant to § 54.202(a). The information shall be submitted at the wire center level or census block as appropriate.

<113> Maps detailing progress towards meeting plan targets
 <114> Report how much universal service (USF) support was received
 <115> How (USF) was used to improve service quality
 <116> How (USF) was used to improve service coverage
 <117> How (USF) was used to improve service capacity
 <118> Provide an explanation of network improvement targets not met in the prior calendar year.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FCC Form 481
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
July 2013

[illegible]

<010>	Study Area Code	220344
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

[illegible]

<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

09/25/2013

FCC Form 481
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net
<810>	Reporting Carrier	Alma Tel. Co.
<811>	Holding Company	Alma Telecom Inc.
<812>	Operating Company	Alma Tel. Co.

[illegible]

(900) Tribal Lands Reporting Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

<910> Tribal Land(s) on which ETC Serves

<920> Tribal Government Engagement Obligation

Name of Attached Document (.pdf)

If your company serves Tribal lands, please select (Yes,No, NA) for each these boxes to confirm the status described on the attached PDF, on line 920, demonstrates coordination with the Tribal government pursuant to § 54.313(a)(9) includes:

- <921> Needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions;
- <922> Feasibility and sustainability planning;
- <923> Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner;
- <924> Compliance with Rights of way processes
- <925> Compliance with Land Use permitting requirements
- <926> Compliance with Facilities Siting rules
- <927> Compliance with Environmental Review processes
- <928> Compliance with Cultural Preservation review processes
- <929> Compliance with Tribal Business and Licensing requirements.

Select (Yes,No, NA)

(1100) No Terrestrial Backhaul Reporting Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

<1120> Please check this box to confirm no terrestrial backhaul options exist within the supported area pursuant to § 54.313(G)
 ☐

<1130> Please check this box to confirm the reporting carrier offers broadband service of at least 1 Mbps downstream and 256 kbps upstream within the supported area pursuant to § 54.313(G)
 ☐

(1200) Terms and Condition for Lifeline Customers Lifeline Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
--	--

<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

<1210> Terms & Conditions of Voice Telephony Lifeline Plans	220344GA1210 <hr/> Name of attached document (.pdf)
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<1220> Link to Public Website	HTTP <hr/>
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“Please check these boxes below to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 1210, or the website listed, on line 1220, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.422(a)(2) annual reporting for ETCs receiving low-income support, carriers must annually report:

<1221> Information describing the terms and conditions of any voice telephony service plans offered to Lifeline subscribers,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<1222> Details on the number of minutes provided as part of the plan,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<1223> Additional charges for toll calls, and rates for each such plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2000) Price Cap Carrier Additional Documentation

Data Collection Form

Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

CHECK the boxes below to note compliance as a recipient of Incremental Connect America Phase I support, frozen High Cost support, High Cost support to offset access charge reductions, and Connect America Phase II support as set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(b),(c),(d),(e) the information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

Incremental Connect America Phase I reporting

- <2010> 2nd Year Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(b)(1)}
- <2011> 3rd Year Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(b)(2)}

Price Cap Carrier Receiving Frozen Support Certification {47 CFR § 54.312(a)}

- <2012> 2013 Frozen Support Certification
- <2013> 2014 Frozen Support Certification
- <2014> 2015 Frozen Support Certification
- <2015> 2016 and future Frozen Support Certification

Price Cap Carrier Connect America ICC Support {47 CFR § 54.313(d)}

- <2016> Certification Support Used to Build Broadband

--

Connect America Phase II Reporting {47 CFR § 54.313(e)}

- <2017> 3rd year Broadband Service Certification
- <2018> 5th year Broadband Service Certification
- <2019> Interim Progress Certification
- <2020> Please check the box to confirm that the attached PDF , on line 2021, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313 (e)(3)(ii), as a recipient of CAF Phase II support shall provide the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year.

- <2021> Interim Progress Community Anchor Institutions

Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

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(3000) Rate Of Return Carrier Additional Documentation Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010>	Study Area Code	220344
<015>	Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

CHECK the boxes below to note compliance on its five year service quality plan (pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.202(a)) and, for privately held carriers, ensuring compliance with the financial reporting requirements set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2). I further certify that the information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

Progress Report on 5 Year Plan

(3010) Milestone Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(i)} Please check this box to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 3012, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313 (f)(1)(ii), as a recipient of CAF Phase II support shall provide the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year.	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3012) Community Anchor Institutions {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(ii)} (3013) Is your company a Privately Held ROR Carrier {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2)} (3014) If yes, does your company file the RUS annual report Please check these boxes to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 3017, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2) compliance requires:	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No) <input type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No)
(3015) Electronic copy of their annual RUS reports (Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers)		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3016) PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3017) If the response is yes on line 3014, attach your company's RUS annual report and all required documentation	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No)
(3018) If the response is no on line 3014, Is your company audited? If the response is yes on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission, on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains :		
(3019) Either a copy of their audited financial statement; or (2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(3020) PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(3021) Management letter issued by the independent certified public accountant that performed the company's financial audit. If the response is no on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission, on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(3022) Copy of their financial statement which has been subject to review by an independent certified public accountant; or 2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers,		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3023) Underlying information subjected to a review by an independent certified public accountant		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3024) Underlying information subjected to an officer certification.		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3025) PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>
(3026) Attach the worksheet listing required information	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	220344GA3026

Certification - Reporting Carrier Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010> Study Area Code	220344
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<030> Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Laure Cohen
<035> Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039> Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF THE REPORTING CARRIER IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTING ON ITS OWN BEHALF:

Certification of Officer as to the Accuracy of the Data Reported for the Annual Reporting for CAF or LI Recipients	
I certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual reporting requirements for universal service support recipients; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported on this form and in any attachments is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	
Signature of Authorized Officer:	Date
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	
Telephone number of Authorized Officer:	
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	Filing Due Date for this form:
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

Certification - Agent / Carrier Data Collection Form	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
---	--

<010> Study Area Code	220344
<015> Study Area Name	ALMA TEL CO
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<035> Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	912-632-3117
<039> Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	lcohen@atcnetworks.net

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF AN AGENT IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTS ON THE CARRIER'S BEHALF:

Certification of Officer to Authorize an Agent to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier	
I certify that (Name of Agent) <u>John Staurulakis Inc.</u> is authorized to submit the information reported on behalf of the reporting carrier. I also certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual data reporting requirements provided to the authorized agent; and, to the best of my knowledge, the reports and data provided to the authorized agent is accurate.	
Name of Authorized Agent:	John Staurulakis Inc.
Name of Reporting Carrier:	ALMA TEL CO
Signature of Authorized Officer:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 09/25/2013
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	Kevin Brooks
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	Persident
Telephone number of Authorized Officer:	9126328603
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	220344 Filing Due Date for this form: 10/15/2013
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Certification of Agent Authorized to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier	
I, as agent for the reporting carrier, certify that I am authorized to submit the annual reports for universal service support recipients on behalf of the reporting carrier; I have provided the data reported herein based on data provided by the reporting carrier; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported herein is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	ALMA TEL CO
Name of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	John Staurulakis, Inc.
Signature of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 09/25/2013
Printed name of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	Bob Ragsdale
Title or position of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	Manager - Regulatory Affairs
Telephone number of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	770-569-2105
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	220344 Filing Due Date for this form: 10/15/2013
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

Attachments

Data Collection Form

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

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<810>	Reporting Carrier	Alma Tel. Co.
<811>	Holding Company	Alma Telecom Inc.
<812>	Operating Company	Alma Tel. Co.

[illegible]

In establishing this certification in its *2005 ETC Order*,¹ the FCC found that an ETC must make “a specific commitment to objective measures to protect consumers.”² The Commission found that for wireless ETCs, compliance with CTIA’s Consumer Code for Wireless Service would satisfy this requirement” and that the sufficiency of other commitments would be considered on a case-by-case basis.³ In this context, the FCC stated, “to the extent a wireline or wireless ETC applicant is subject to consumer protection obligations under state law, compliance with such laws may meet our requirement.”⁴

Alma Telephone Company, Inc. (“Alma”) hereby certifies that it is in compliance with applicable service quality standards and consumer protection rules. Alma is subject to consumer protection obligations under Georgia state law. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) filing a Local Exchange Tariff pursuant to the requirements of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission which discloses rates, and terms and conditions of service to customers (Chapter 515-12-1-.02(5)(a) and .04(5) of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission); (2) adherence to state consumer protection requirements governing telephone providers which require Service Standards (Chapter 515-12-1-.17 and .18 of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission); Customer Billing (Chapter 515-12-1-.04(4) of the Rules of the Georgia

¹ *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Report and Order, FCC 05-46 (rel. Mar. 17, 2005) (“*2005 ETC Order*”).

² *Id.* at para. 28.

³ *Id.* The FCC noted that under the CTIA Consumer Code, wireless carriers agree to: “(1) disclose rates and terms of service to customers; (2) make available maps showing where service is generally available; (3) provide contract terms to customers and confirm changes in service; (4) allow a trial period for new service; (5) provide specific disclosures in advertising; (6) separately identify carrier charges from taxes on billing statements; (7) provide customers the right to terminate service for changes to contract terms; (8) provide ready access to customer service; (9) promptly respond to consumer inquiries and complaints received from government agencies; and (10) abide by policies for protection of consumer privacy.” *Id.* at n. 71.

⁴ *Id.* at n. 72.

Public Service; and Customer Complaints (Chapter 515-12-1-.08 of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission); (3) truth-in-billing requirements (Chapter 515-12-1-.04(4) of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission); and (4) CPNI, Red Flag Rules and other applicable federal and state requirements governing the protection of customers' privacy.

Alma Telephone Company, Inc. (“Alma”) hereby certifies that it is able to function in emergency situations as set forth in 47 C.F.R. §54.202(a)(2)¹ and Chapter 515-12-1-.11(4) of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission. Alma’s network is designed to remain functional in emergency situations without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations as required by 47 C.F.R. §54.202(a)(2) and Chapter 515-12-1-.11(4) of the Rules of the Georgia Public Service Commission. Alma can change call routing translations as needed to reroute traffic around damaged facilities. Changing call routing translations will also allow Alma to manage traffic spikes throughout its network, as emergency situations require.

Specifically, each central office building is supplied with standby generators and battery back-up that enable the central office to keep running until power is restored so long as fuel is available, or until system changes are made to reroute traffic. Alma has battery backup at all office locations and in its electronic equipment sites. Length of run time is determined by the equipment serving the area and the number of customers working out of the equipment.

¹ Section 54.202(a)(2) requires ETCs that are designated by the Commission to “demonstrate its ability to remain functional in emergency situations, including a demonstration that it has a reasonable amount of back-up power to ensure functionality without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations.”

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

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GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.1 GENERAL APPLICATION

4.1.1 The rules and regulations set out in this Tariff apply to the services and associated facilities furnished by the Company within its operating territory in the exchanges listed in Section 2 of this Tariff.

4.1.2 The rules and regulations in this section govern the furnishing of Local Exchange Service to customers. These rules and regulations are in addition to the rules and regulations contained in other Tariffs filed by this Company.

In the event of any conflict between any rate, regulation, or provision contained in these General Rules and Regulations and any rate, regulation or provision contained in the Tariffs described above, the rate, regulation, or provision of the specific Tariff shall apply.

4.1.3 Complete Tariffs containing all rates for Local Exchange Service will be kept at all times in the Company's local business office where they will be available for public inspection during regular business hours. Copies may be obtained at reproduction cost.

4.1.4 The rules and regulations specified herein may be modified by the State of Georgia or the Commission. The Company will comply with any changes which take precedence over this Tariff, unless otherwise established by the courts.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.1 GENERAL APPLICATION (Cont'd)

4.1.5 Failure on the part of any customer to observe these rules and regulations of this Tariff gives the Company the right to cancel all contracts and discontinue the furnishing of service.

4.1.6 These Tariffs cancel and supersede all other Tariffs of the Company issued and effective prior to the effective date shown on the individual pages of this Tariff.

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE

4.2.1 Availability of Facilities

- A. The Company's obligation to furnish service is dependent on its ability to obtain and maintain suitable rights of way and facilities, without unreasonable expense, for the provision of such service.
- B. The rates and charges quoted in this Tariff provide for the furnishing of service and facilities where suitable facilities are available or when the construction of the necessary facilities does not involve excessive costs. Section 10 of this Tariff sets forth the regulations for determining charges when excessive costs are involved for the construction of facilities.
- C. The Company shall not be liable for failure to furnish service unless the purchase price and costs expended by the Company in acquiring such special or private rights of way by purchase or condemnation is paid or guaranteed to the Company by the customer. The rights of way referred to here are only those rights of way leading from the Company's distribution facilities to the premises of the customer.
- D. When service and facilities are provided in part by the Company and in part by other connecting companies the regulations of the Company apply to that portion of the service and facilities furnished by the Company.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.2 Application for Service

- A. Applications for service or requests or orders by the customer for additional services or facilities may be made orally, or in writing when deemed necessary by the Company, and shall constitute a contract when accepted by authorized employees or agents of the Company, or upon establishment of service.
- B. An applicant may be required to make an advance payment at the time the application is accepted, in cases where a deposit is not collected. The amount of the payment will be based on applicable Service Connection Charges and the first month's charges for Exchange Service. The provisions of this paragraph affect the initial payment only and regular monthly charges for service as well as billing and collection practices discussed within this Tariff are otherwise applicable.

4.2.3 Cancellation or Change in Application for Service

- A. Where the customer cancels an application for service prior to the start of installation of service or of special construction no charge applies.
- B. Where installation of service has been started prior to the cancellation, a Cancellation Charge equal to the Minimum Service Charge may apply.
- C. For switched and nonswitched services, the Cancellation Charge shall be the costs incurred by the Company up to the time of cancellation.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.3 Cancellation or Change in Application for Service (Cont'd)

- D. Where special construction has been started prior to the cancellation, a charge equal to the costs incurred in the special construction, less net salvage, shall apply. Installation or special construction for a customer is considered to have started when the Company incurs any expense in connection therewith or in preparation therefore which would not otherwise have been incurred.
- E. When a customer requests a change in location of all or a part of the facilities covered by the application for service, or additions, rearrangements, or modifications of existing service prior to completion of the work involved, the customer is also required to pay the amount of additional costs and expenses incurred by the Company in completing the work as changed.

4.2.4 Refusal of Service

- A. Compliance by Applicant:
 - 1. The Company may refuse to serve an applicant until such applicant has complied with the State and municipal regulations and the rules and regulations outlined in the Company's Tariff on file with the Commission governing the service applied for. Service may also be refused for any one of the following reasons:
 - a. The applicant's installation or equipment is known to be inadequate, hazardous or of such character that satisfactory service cannot be given.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.4 Refusal of Service (Cont'd)

A. Compliance by Applicant: (Cont'd)

1. (Cont'd)

- b.** The applicant is indebted to any utility Company for the same kind of service as that applied for including the carriage charges, only, of interexchange carriers where the Company bills those charges pursuant to its Tariffs. However, in the event the indebtedness of the applicant for service is in dispute, the applicant shall be provided service upon complying with the deposit requirement described in this section of the Company's Tariff.
- c.** For refusal to make a deposit if the applicant is required to make a deposit under the requirements outlined in this Tariff.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.4 Refusal of Service (Cont'd)

B. Applicant's Recourse

In the event the Company refuses to serve an applicant, the Company will inform the applicant of the reasons for its refusal and that the applicant may file a complaint with the Commission.

C. Insufficient Grounds for Refusal of Service

The following shall not constitute sufficient cause for refusal of service to a present customer or applicant:

1. Failure to pay for merchandise or charges for nonutility service purchased from the Company.
2. Failure to pay a bill to correct previous underbilling due to misapplication of rates more than six months prior to the date of application.
3. Violation of the Company's rules pertaining to operation of nonstandard equipment or unauthorized attachments which interferes with the service of others, or other services such as communication services, unless the customer has first been notified and been afforded reasonable opportunity to comply with said rules.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.4 Refusal of Service (Cont'd)

C. Insufficient Grounds for Refusal of Service (Cont'd)

4. Failure to pay the bill of another customer at the same address except where the change of customer identity is made to avoid or evade payment of a telephone bill. A customer may request a supervisory review if the Company determines that evasion has occurred and refuses to provide service.

4.2.5 Transfer, Assignment, or Supersedure of Service

- A. Service previously furnished to one customer may not be assumed by a new customer without lapse in the rendition of service. The new customer must execute a new service agreement which is subject to the provisions of this Tariff.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.6 Minimum Service Periods

Unless otherwise specified elsewhere in this Tariff, the minimum service period for all services offered in this Tariff is one month beginning on and including the day following the establishment of service. The minimum service period relates to each applicable unit of service, either on the initial or subsequent installations. For purposes of administration, each month is considered to have thirty days.

4.2.7 Priority of Establishment of Service

Applications for service in a particular exchange will be completed in the chronological order of their receipt to the extent practical and economical, and depending on the availability of facilities. Where facilities are limited, the following order of precedence shall apply:

- A. Application for service for a use directly connected with national defense or where war conditions are involved.
- B. Application for service for a use directly connected with cases of emergency involving public safety, health, or welfare.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.2 ESTABLISHING SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.2.7 Priority of Establishment of Service (Cont'd)

- C. Application for service needed because of serious illness or where unreasonable hardship would otherwise result.
- D. Application for new business service.
- E. All other applications for service.

4.2.8 Installation of Service

- A. Applications for service will be processed in accordance with service objectives established by the Commission for installation of service.
- B. The Company shall provide to the customer a due date on which a requested installation or change shall be made. If a customer requests that the work be done on a regular working day later than that offered by the Company, then the customer's requested date shall be the commitment date. If a premises visit is required, the Company shall establish an appointment period with the customer for morning or afternoon, on the due date.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE

4.3.1 Provision and Ownership of Service and Facilities

Service and facilities furnished by the Company on the premises of a customer or authorized user are the property of the Company and are provided upon the condition that such service and facilities, except as expressly provided in this Tariff, must be installed, relocated, and maintained by the Company. Company employees and agents may enter said premises at any reasonable hour to make collections from coin boxes, to install, to inspect, or to repair any part of the Company's facilities on the customer's premises, or to remove such facilities which are no longer necessary for the provision of service.

4.3.2 Emergency Procedures

The Company may make reasonable provisions to meet emergencies resulting from failure of service and shall establish procedures to be followed in the event of emergency in order to prevent or mitigate interruption or impairment of service.

4.3.3 Company Facilities at Hazardous or Inaccessible Locations

- A. Where service is to be established or maintained at a location that would involve undue hazards or where accessibility is impracticable to employees of the Company, the Company may refuse to furnish such service and/or the customer may be required to install and maintain the Company's facilities in a manner satisfactory to the Company. The customer will reimburse the Company for any unusual costs involved.
- B. The customer shall indemnify and hold the Company harmless from any and all loss, claims, or damage by reason of the installation and maintenance of such service and/or facilities.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.4 Protective Equipment

- A. Protective equipment is required when a hazardous electrical environment is present at a customer's premises and when the estimated rise in ground potential is sufficient to cause damage to Company facilities or to endanger the safety of the Company's employees or customers. The customer may elect to provide the protective equipment subject to Company specifications, or such protective equipment can be provided by the Company in accordance with the rates, terms and conditions of Section 10 of this Tariff.
- B. Other special protective equipment and/or neutralizing transformers, isolating transformers, drain coils for use in providing service to customer's premises where there are high ground potentials, even though not required, may be provided by the customer, subject to specifications, or in accordance with the rates, terms and conditions of Section 10 of this Tariff.
- C. All equipment connected to the Company's facilities and the telecommunications network shall meet the provisions of Part 68 of the Federal Communications Commission's Rules and Regulations and Section 11 of this Tariff.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.5 Telephone Numbers

- A. Telephone numbers are the property of the Company and are assigned to the service furnished the customer. The Company reserves the right to change such numbers and/or the central office name associated with such numbers assigned to the customer, whenever the Company deems it necessary to do so in the conduct of its business.
- B. The Company shall list each customer with directory assistance by the close of the following working day, except those numbers not listed at the customer's request.
- C. All nonassigned telephone numbers in central offices serving more than 500 access lines shall be intercepted unless otherwise approved by the Commission.
- D. Disconnected residence telephone numbers shall not be reassigned for 120 days. Disconnected business numbers shall not be reassigned, unless requested by the customer, for 180 days or the life of the directory, whichever is longer, unless no other numbers are available for providing service to new customers.
- E. When additions or changes in plant or changes to any other of the Company's operations necessitate changing telephone numbers to a group of customers, at least 45 days written notice shall be given to all affected customers even though the addition or changes may be coincident with a directory issue.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.6 Classifications of Service

A. Basis for Classification

1. The determination as to whether customer service should be classified as business or residence service is based on the character of the use to be made of the service and facilities. This consideration is, in all cases, the basis upon which the rates for any particular service are classified, and any indices of such character of use should be applied with this primary definition in mind.
2. The Company reserves the right to classify any local service furnished a customer as business or residence service, in compliance with this Tariff.

B. Application of Business Rates

Business rates apply whenever the use of the service is primarily or substantially of a commercial, professional, institutional, or otherwise occupational nature, or where the listing required is such as to indicate business use.

Business rates apply for:

1. Offices, stores, factories, resorts, construction offices, and all other places of a strictly commercial, professional or business nature.
2. Boarding houses, hotels (except as modified under Section 4.3.6.C.2), offices or hallways of apartment buildings, colleges, quarters occupied by clubs and fraternal societies. In public, private, or parochial schools, hospitals, nursing homes, libraries, and other institutions.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.6 Classifications of Service (Cont'd)

B. Application of Business Rates (Cont'd)

3. Residence locations when the customer has no regular business service, and the continued, recurring use of the service over an extended period of time either by the customer, members of his/her household, or his/her guests, or parties calling him/her can be considered as more of a business than of a residential nature. An extended period of time would be one month or longer. This fact might be indicated by typical forms of advertising, or when such business use is not such as commonly arises and passes over residence telephones during the intervals when, in compliance with the law or established custom, business places are ordinarily closed.
4. Residence locations where the residence is physically connected to a place of business or an office is maintained within the premises, the customer has no regular business service, and it is not evident that the service located in the residence is to be employed primarily for domestic use.
5. Residence locations when an additional jack, station or extension bell is located in a shop, office or other place of business.
6. Any location where a business designation is provided or when any title indicating a trade or profession is listed, except as modified under Section 4.3.6.C.4 of this Tariff.
7. All other locations where the customer's primary use of the service is for business purposes.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

B. Application of Business Rates (Cont'd)

8. Service terminating solely on the answering service facilities of a telephone answering firm.

4.3.6 Classifications of Service (Cont'd)

C. Application of Residence Rates

Residence rates apply when the use of the service is of a domestic nature, provided that service is not used substantially for occupational purposes.

Residence rates apply for:

1. Private residences if either alphabetical or classified business directory listings are not requested or provided.
2. Private apartments in hotels, and rooming or boarding houses where service is confined to the domestic use of the customer and business directory listings are not employed.
3. In rooming or boarding houses which are not advertised or listed in the directory as a place of business or which have less than five rooms for rent, or which furnish meals to less than ten boarders.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.6 Classifications of Service (Cont'd)

C. Application of Residence Rates (Cont'd)

4. The residence of a clergyman or nurse, physician, surgeon, dentist, veterinarian, or other medical practitioner, or certain other professional groups, provided no business designation is employed and the customer does not maintain an office within the residence in which a telephone or jack is located. Titles such as "Dr.", "Rev.", "Judge", and "Professor" are not considered business designations when associated with individual names. If listings of firms or partnerships, *etc.*, or additional listings of persons not residing in the same household are desired, business rates apply.
5. In fire department meeting rooms, dormitories or sleeping quarters where the telephone number is not published and the service is not available for use by the general public.
6. In churches where the telephone is not available for public use, as in a clergyman's study.

- D. Changes in classification from business service to residence service will not require a change in telephone number provided directory advertising does not apply.
- E. Changes in classification from residence to business service may be made without change in telephone number if the customer so desires.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.7 Installation, Maintenance, and Repair of Facilities

- A. All ordinary expense of installation, maintenance, and repairs of Company equipment and facilities, unless otherwise specified in this Tariff, is borne by the Company. Where special conditions or requirements of the customer involve unusual construction or installation costs, the customer may be required to pay a reasonable proportion of such costs. In case of damage, loss, theft, or destruction of any of the Company's property due to the negligence or willful act of the customer or other persons authorized to use the service and not due to ordinary wear and tear, the customer shall be required to pay the actual expense incurred by the Company in connection with replacement of the property or the expense incurred in restoring it to its original condition.
- B. The customer shall not install, disconnect, rearrange, remove, or attempt to repair any facilities owned and furnished by the Company or permit others to do so, except upon the written consent of the Company or as otherwise specified in the Company's applicable Tariffs. The Company shall have the right to charge the customer for losses experienced as a result of unauthorized tampering.
- C. The customer may be billed the applicable Minimum Service Charge for each service call to the customer's premises where off-hook condition is found.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3 FURNISHING OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.3.8 Work Performed Outside Regular Working Hours

The rates and charges specified in this Tariff contemplate that all work in connection with furnishing or rearranging service will be performed during regular working hours. Whenever a customer requests that work necessarily required in the furnishing or arranging of his service be performed outside the Company's regular working hours, or that work already started should be interrupted, the customer may be required to pay the amount of additional costs the Company incurs as a result of the customer's special requirements, in addition to the other rates and charges specified in this Tariff.

4.4 USE OF SERVICE AND FACILITIES

4.4.1 Use of Service

- A. Customer telephone service is furnished for the use of the customer, customer's family, employees or business associates, persons residing in the customer's household, patients of hospitals, and patrons of hotels/motels. The Company may refuse to install or may terminate a customer's service if it is located on premises of a public or semi-public nature or in a business establishment, where the public in general or patrons of the customer may make use of the service.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.4 USE OF SERVICE AND FACILITIES (Cont'd)

4.4.1 Use of Service (Cont'd)

- B. Services provided by the Company may not be resold by the customer or used in any manner for which the customer receives compensation from the user except as provided herein:
 - 1. Access services provided pursuant to interstate or intrastate access services Tariffs the Company issues or concurs in.
 - 2. Services provided to hotels, motels, hospitals, and cellular and paging customers when such services are resold to guests, patients, or customers.
- C. The customer is responsible for payment of all charges of the Company for all services ordered by the customer, including those that are shared or resold as provided herein, regardless of whether such charges are associated with the customer's usage or that of any authorized users and regardless of whether such authorized users have paid the customer for their share of the Company's charges.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.4 USE OF SERVICE AND FACILITIES (Cont'd)

4.4.1 Use of Service (Cont'd)

- D. Given the customer's exclusive control of his communications over the Company's provided facilities, and of the other uses for which the Company facilities may be furnished, and because errors incident to the service and the use of facilities are unavoidable, the services and facilities furnished by the Company are subject to the terms, conditions and limitations specified herein.

4.4.2 Establishment of Identity

The calling party shall establish his/her identity in the course of any communication as often as may be necessary, and shall be solely responsible for establishing the identity of the person with whom connection is made at the called location.

4.4.3 Accessories Provided by the Customer

No equipment, accessory, apparatus, circuit or device shall be attached to or connected with the Company facilities except as provided in this Tariff. In case any such unauthorized attachment or connection is made, the Company shall have the right to remove or disconnect the same, to suspend service during the continuance of said attachment or connection, or to disconnect service. The customer shall be held responsible for the cost of correcting any impairment of service caused by the use of such attachments or connections and shall be billed for each service call made to his/her premises because of the use of such attachments or connections.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.4 USE OF SERVICE AND FACILITIES (Cont'd)

4.4.4 Limit On Communication

The Company reserves the right to limit the length of communications when necessary due to a shortage of facilities caused by emergency conditions.

4.4.5 Transmitting Messages

The Company offers the use of its facilities when available for communication between end users. However, the Company will not transmit messages and will not be liable for errors in transmission or for failure to establish connections. Employees of the Company are forbidden to accept either oral or written messages to be transmitted over the facilities of the Company.

4.4.6 Unlawful, Abusive, or Fraudulent Use of Service

- A. The service is furnished subject to the condition that it will not be used for any unlawful purpose. Service will be discontinued, after proper written notice, if any law enforcement agency, acting within its apparent jurisdiction, advises in writing that such service is being used in violation of law. The Company will refuse to furnish service when it has reasonable grounds to believe that such service will be used in violation of law. The Company shall in no event be liable for any damage resulting from any action taken or threatened pursuant to this Section.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.4 USE OF SERVICE AND FACILITIES (Cont'd)

4.4.6 Unlawful, Abusive, or Fraudulent Use of Service (Cont'd)

- B. The Company may suspend or terminate telephone service to any person(s), firm or corporation who: uses or permits the use of foul, abusive, obscene or profane language over the facilities furnished by the Company; or impersonates or permits impersonation of any other individual with fraudulent or malicious intent; or uses or permits their telephone to be used to make calls whether anonymous or otherwise in any manner which could reasonably be expected to frighten, abuse, torment, or harass another; or uses the service in such a manner as to interfere in any way with the service of others.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service

A. Non-payment Service Interruption

In the event of a proposed disconnection of Residential Basic Local Service only, the following procedures shall apply:

1. No Basic Residential Service shall be disconnected for Local Service Charge until at least 29 days from the date of the bill.
2. No Residential Service can be disconnected for Local Service Charges unless the utility has given the affected customer a written notice of the proposed disconnection at least five (5) days before the proposed date of disconnection. The notice must include:
 - a. The final payment date of the amount due;
 - b. The reason for the disconnection, including the unpaid balance due;
 - c. A telephone number which the customer may call for information about the proposed disconnection; and
 - d. The procedure for medical emergencies, as hereinafter described.
3. If contact with the customer was not previously made and notice of the disconnection was by mail or by leaving it at the premises, the utility must make a good faith effort to contact the customer at least two (2) days before the proposed disconnection.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

A. Non-payment Service Interruption (Cont'd)

4. Service shall not be disconnected for nonpayment of local service charged to a residential customer who has a serious illness which would be aggravated by said discontinuation, provided that the customer notifies the utility of this condition in writing, or orally and within ten (10) days of giving such initial notice furnishes to the utility a written statement from a physician, county board of health, hospital, or clinic identifying the illness and its expected duration, and certifying that the illness would be aggravated by such discontinuance. In such event, the proposed disconnection shall be held in abeyance for the shorter of either the length of the illness or one month from the date of such initial notice, and the customer may renew the postponement period one additional time by repeating the aforementioned procedure. If there is a dispute regarding the existence of a serious illness, the case may be referred to the Commission for final determination.
 - a. The Company may impose toll restriction to a residential customer who has an illness, as specified above, until payment of all charges has been made.
5. In the case of a disputed bill for Residential Basic Local Exchange Service, the customer shall have the right, after all remedial measures with the utility have failed, to request in writing, or orally to be followed by a request in writing, that the Commission investigate the dispute before Residential Service may be disconnected. Such request must be made within ten (10) days after the date of the disputed bill.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

A. Non-payment Service Interruption (Cont'd)

6. No consumer may be disconnected for unpaid Residential Local Service if the consumer notifies the Company between the date of receiving a notification of the proposed disconnection of service and the date set for disconnection and agrees to pay the unpaid balance for service previously provided in equal installments over the three consecutive billing months immediately following said notice. Further, the consumer agrees to pay future bills and the installments by the date due. However, if a consumer has received a notice of intent to disconnect, at any time prior to the time when the consumer is once again current in his billings for service previously provided, if the consumer makes toll calls exceeding \$10.00 in any thirty (30) day period, the telephone company shall have the right to immediately and without further notice, disconnect telephone service to that consumer. Similarly, if the consumer fails to make any agreed upon payment as set forth immediately above, the Company may disconnect service without further notice.
7. If a customer's check is returned for insufficient funds or dishonored by the bank, this constitutes an automatic waiver of the written notice requirements.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

B. Disconnection With Notice

Telephone service may be disconnected after proper notice for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to pay a delinquent account or failure to comply with the terms of a deferred payment agreement including only the carriage charges of an interexchange carrier when the Company bills for those carriers.
2. Violation of the Company's rules pertaining to the use of service in a manner which interferes with the service of others or the operation of nonstandard equipment when a reasonable attempt has been made to notify the customer and the customer is provided with a reasonable opportunity to remedy the situation.
3. Failure to comply with deposit or guarantee arrangements where required.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

C. Telephone service may be disconnected without notice under either of the following conditions:

1. Where a known dangerous condition exists for as long as the condition exists. Where reasonable given the nature of the hazardous condition, a written statement providing notice of disconnection and the reason therefore shall be posted at the place of common entry or upon the front door of each affected residential unit as soon as possible after service has been disconnected.
2. Where service is connected without authority by a person who has not made application for service, or who has reconnected service without authority following termination of service for nonpayment, or in instances of tampering with the Company's equipment or bypassing the same.

D. Insufficient Grounds for Disconnection

Telephone service may not be disconnected for any of the following reasons:

1. Delinquency in payment for service by a previous occupant of the premises.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

D. Insufficient Grounds for Disconnection (Cont'd)

2. Failure to pay for merchandise or charges for non-utility service purchased from the Company.
3. Failure to pay for a different type or class of telephone service unless charges for such service are included on the same bill.
4. Failure to pay the account of another customer as guarantor thereof, unless the Company has in writing the guarantee as a condition precedent to services.
5. Failure to pay charges arising from an underbilling occurring due to any misapplication of rates more than six (6) months prior to the current billing.
6. Failure to pay charges for calls to pay-per-call information services, as described in Section 8 of this Tariff.

E. Disconnection on Holidays or Weekends

Unless a dangerous condition exists or unless the customer requests disconnection, service shall not be disconnected on a day, or on a day immediately preceding a day, when personnel of the Company are not available to the public for the purpose of making collections and reconnecting services.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.1 Discontinuance of Service (Cont'd)

F. Abandonment of Service

The Company may not abandon a customer or a certified service area without written notice to its customers therein and all similar neighboring companies and without approval from the Commission.

G. Cancellation of Service for Cause

Pursuant to the requirements of Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) Section 46-5-25, the telephone service of any subscriber terminating at the location of a facsimile machine which is used or operated in violation of the provisions set forth following shall be subject to disconnection if the violation does not cease within 10 days from the date of delivery shown on the return receipt of the certified letter mailed by the Company to the subscriber notifying the subscriber of the violation. A copy of this letter shall also be sent to the Georgia Public Service Commission.

1. It shall be a violation for any subscriber to initiate the transmission of, employ or direct another person to initiate the transmission of, or contact for the initiation of the transmission of an unsolicited facsimile message for the commercial purpose of advertising or offering the sale, lease, rental, or gift of any goods, services, or real personal property.
2. Paragraph 1. preceding shall not apply where the recipient has consented to the receipt of one or more telefacsimile messages or where there exists a prior contractual or business relationship between the recipient and the initiator or the initiator's principal.

(N)

(N)

(M)

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.2 Termination of Service

A. Termination of Service by the Company

1. When the service is terminated on the initiative of the Company because of violation of its regulations by the customer, the regulations stipulated in the paragraph below for termination of service by the customer apply.
2. Should service be terminated for nonpayment of charges, restoration of service will be made only as prescribed in Section 4.5.4 of this Tariff.

B. Termination of Service by the Customer

Service may be terminated at any time upon reasonable notice from the customer to the Company. Upon such termination, the customer shall be responsible for the payment of all charges due. This includes all charges due for the period of service that has been rendered plus any unexpired portion of a minimum service period and applicable Termination Charges.

4.5.3 Suspension of Business & Residence Service

Upon request, a customer receiving business or residence services may arrange for the temporary suspension of such service, for vacation or other similar purposes, subject to the terms and conditions specified in this Tariff.

4.5.4 Restoration of Service

- A. For restoration of a customer's telecommunications service when service has been disconnected the following conditions are applicable. Service Charges are discussed in Section 5 of this Tariff.
- B. Service will be restored within a reasonable length of time during regular working hours after payment of all past due charges, including any required deposit, and the payment of service charges for restoration of service. The Company may request the customer to supply cash, money order, or cashier's check in payment for the bill and Service Charge(s) in lieu of accepting a personal check or moneys not guaranteed.
- C. If the customer's service has been terminated the customer must reapply for telephone service as a new applicant before having service restored. Such application will be subject to applicable Service Charges.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.5 DISCONNECTION, TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE (Cont'd)

4.5.4 Restoration of Service (Cont'd)

- D. At its discretion, the Company may restore or re-establish service which has been suspended or disconnected for nonpayment of charges prior to payment of all charges due. Such restoration or re-establishment shall not be construed as a waiver by the Company of any rights to suspend or disconnect service for nonpayment of charges due and unpaid, or for the violation of the provisions of this Tariff. Moreover, the Company's failure to suspend or disconnect service for nonpayment of any past due account or accounts shall not operate as a waiver or estoppel to suspend or disconnect service for nonpayment of such account or of any other past due account.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS

4.6.1 General

- A. The Company will maintain a current set of maps showing the physical locations of its facilities and telephone exchange locations. Each central location will have available up-to-date maps or records of its immediate area, with such other information as may be necessary to enable the Company to advise applicants and others entitled to the information, as to the facilities available for serving that locality.
- B. Upon request for service by a residential applicant or upon request for transfer of service by a residential customer, the Company shall inform the applicant or customer of the Company's lowest priced alternatives available at the customer's location. The Company shall provide this information beginning with the lowest priced alternative and giving full consideration to applicable service or equipment options and Installation Charges.
- C. The Company will post a notice in a conspicuous place in each business office of the Company where applications for service are received informing the public that copies of the rate schedules and rules relating to the services of the Company, as filed with the Commission, are available for inspection.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.1 General (Cont'd)

- D. The Company will provide to all new residential telephone utility customers, at the time service is initiated, a pamphlet or information packet advising the applicant of his or her rights as a customer. This information shall inform the customers concerning their right to request information relating to rates and services; bill payment policies; regulations in regard to termination of service; billing disputes; information about alternative payment plans; reconnection of service after involuntary termination; customer complaints, supervisory review by the Company and registering a complaint with the Commission; Company business office hours, addresses and telephone numbers; deposits; statement of nondiscrimination; and availability of any special services such as readers or notices in braille, as well as the telephone number of the teletypewriter for the deaf at the Commission.
- E. The Company will provide a printed statement on customers bills or a billing insert identifying the location of the information in Paragraph D, above if such information is included in its telephone directory. Such statement or insert will be provided every twelve (12) months.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.2 Customer Complaints

- A. Upon complaint to the Company by a customer either at the Company's office by letter or by telephone, the Company shall promptly make a suitable investigation and advise the complainant of the results thereof.
- B. In the event the complainant is dissatisfied with the Company's report, the Company will advise the complainant of the Commission complaint process, and inform the complainant that they may contact the Division at the Commission which is responsible for handling complaints.
- C. Upon receipt of a complaint, either by letter or by telephone, from the Commission on behalf of a customer, the Company shall make a suitable investigation and advise the Commission within 28 days of the results thereof.
- D. The Company shall keep a record of all complaints which shall show the name and address of the complainant, the date and nature of the complaint, and the adjustment or disposition thereof, for a period of two years subsequent to the final settlement of the complaint. Complaints with reference to rates or charges which require no further action by the Company will not be recorded.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit

A. Definition of Applicant and Customer

For purposes of this subsection, an applicant is defined as a person who applies for service for the first time or reapplies at a new or existing location after discontinuance of service. Customer is defined as someone who is currently receiving service.

B. Establishment of Credit

1. The Company may require a permanent residential applicant for service to satisfactorily establish credit, but such establishment of credit will not relieve the customer from prompt payment of bills. Credit history shall be applied equally for a reasonable period of time to a spouse or former spouse who shared telephone service. Credit history applies equally to both, without modification.
2. A residential applicant will not be required to pay a deposit subject to the following rules:
 - a. If the residential applicant has been a customer of any Company for the same kind of service within the last three (3) years and is not delinquent in payment of any such telephone service account, and during the last twelve (12) consecutive months of service, did not have more than one occasion in which a bill for such telephone service was paid after becoming delinquent, and never had service disconnected for nonpayment. Applicants are encouraged to obtain a letter of credit from their previous serving Company.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

B. Establishment of Credit (Cont'd)

2. (Cont'd)

b. If the residential applicant furnishes in writing a satisfactory guarantee to secure payment of bills for the service required.

(1). The third party guarantor must be a customer of the Company and must have been a customer of the Company for at least one (1) year, and have established satisfactory credit in which no balance has been carried forward, and without having service disconnected for nonpayment of account, and without having more than two (2) occasions in which a bill was delinquent in the past twelve (12) consecutive months.

(2). The guaranty contract shall be on a form provided by the Company which shall include the Company's right to transfer charges from a defaulted bill of the customer from whom a deposit or Contract of Guaranty was required, to the guarantor's account or accounts and the further right to suspend the guarantor's service as provided in this Tariff.

(3). Unless otherwise agreed to by the guarantor, the guarantee shall be for the amount of the deposit the Company would normally seek on the applicant's account. The amount of the guarantee shall be clearly indicated on any documents or contracts of guaranty signed by the guarantor.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

B. Establishment of Credit (Cont'd)

2. (Cont'd)

- c. If the residential applicant demonstrates a satisfactory credit rating by appropriate means including, but not limited to, the production of generally acceptable credit cards, letters of credit reference, the names of credit references which may be quickly and inexpensively contacted by the Company, or by ownership of substantial equity.
 - d. All applicants for permanent residential service who are sixty-five (65) years of age or older will be considered as having established credit if such applicant does not have an outstanding account balance with the Company or another telephone Company for the same telephone service which accrued within the last five (5) years.
 - 3. An applicant for business service may be required to make a deposit if the credit of the applicant for service has not been established satisfactorily to the Company.
 - 4. Every applicant who has previously been a customer of the Company and whose service has been discontinued for nonpayment of bills shall be required to pay all amounts due the Company, or execute a deferred payment agreement if offered, and re-establish credit before service is rendered by the Company.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit

C. Interests on Deposits

1. The Company shall pay interest on deposits at the rate of seven percent (7%) per annum. Interest on deposits shall accrue annually and, if requested, shall be annually credited to the customer by deducting such interest from the amount of the next bill for service following the accrual date.
2. After the customer has paid for twelve (12) consecutive bills for service without having had service discontinued for nonpayment or had more than one occasion in which a bill was not paid within the period prescribed by the regulations of the Company on file with the Commission, and the customer is not then delinquent in the payment of his bills, the Company shall annually and automatically refund the deposit plus accrued interest. Deposits maturing under this Section for refund and falling on other than the Company's normal annual refund date will be promptly returned to the customer upon request. If the customer has had service discontinued for nonpayment of his bill or had more than one past due bill for such period, the Company shall thereafter review the account every twelve (12) billings and shall promptly and automatically refund the deposit plus accrued interest after the customer has not had service discontinued for nonpayment of bill or had more than one such past due bill during the twelve (12) billings prior to any review and is not then delinquent in the payment of his bills.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

D. Deposit Required

1. When a permanent residential or business applicant does not meet the conditions listed in Section 4.6.3.B, a deposit will be required by the Company subject to the following rules:
2. Initial Deposit
 - a. The required initial deposit shall not exceed an amount equivalent to two and one-half months local service and the estimated call messages during a like period.
 - b. The Company may require an initial deposit from residential customers if the customer has been delinquent in paying a bill for telephone service on more than one occasion during the last twelve (12) consecutive months of service or if the customer's service was disconnected for nonpayment. The customer may furnish a satisfactory written guarantee to secure payment of bills, instead of paying a cash deposit.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

E. Information Provided With Deposits

At the time a deposit is required, the Company shall provide written information about deposits to applicants for, or customers of, business or residential service. This information will include:

1. The circumstances under which the Company may require a deposit, or request an additional deposit;
2. How a deposit is calculated;
3. The amount of interest paid on a deposit and how this interest is calculated; and
4. The time frame and requirement for return of the deposit to the customer.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

F. Interest on Deposits

Payment of interest to the customer shall be made annually if requested by the customer, or at the time the deposit is returned or credited to the customer's account. The rate of interest to be paid on Customer deposits shall be paid at the rate prescribed by the Georgia Public Service Commission, payable annually for the time such deposits were held by the Company and the Customer was served by the Company. Such interest shall be calculated to December 1 of each year.

G. Records of Deposits

1. The Company will keep records to show:
 - a. The name and address of each depositor;
 - b. The amount and date of the deposit; and
 - c. Each transaction concerning the deposit.
2. The Company will issue a receipt of deposit to each applicant from whom a deposit is received and will provide means whereby a depositor may establish his claim if the receipt is lost.
3. A record of each unclaimed deposit will be maintained for four (4) years, during which time the Company will make a reasonable effort to return the deposit.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

H. Refund of Deposit:

1. If service is not connected or after disconnection of service, the Company will promptly and automatically refund the customer's deposit plus accrued interest or the balance, if any, in excess of the unpaid bills for service furnished. A transfer of service from one premises to another within the service area of the Company shall not be deemed a disconnection where refund of the deposit is concerned.
2. When the customer has paid bills for service for twelve (12) consecutive residential billings or for twelve (12) consecutive business billings without having service disconnected for non-payment of bill and without having more than two occasions in which a bill was delinquent, and when the customer is not delinquent in the payment of the current bills, the Company will promptly and automatically refund the deposit plus accrued pro rated interest for the year at a rate prescribed by the Georgia Public Service Commission in the form of cash or a credit to a customer's bill, or void any guarantee of payment and return any documents or contracts of guarantee to the guarantor. If the customer does not meet these refund criteria the deposit or contract of guarantee may be retained.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.3 Applicant or Customer Deposit (Cont'd)

I. Complaint by Applicant or Customer

The Company directs its employees engaged in initial contact with an applicant or customer seeking to establish or re-establish credit, to inform the customer, if dissatisfaction is expressed with the Company's decision, of the customer's right to file a complaint with the Commission.

4.6.4 Payment for Service

A customer shall be responsible for the payment of all charges for services and equipment furnished the customer, including charges for services originated and/or charges accepted at the customer telephone. Failure to receive a bill or disconnect notice does not relieve the customer of the responsibility for payment provided the Company has followed procedures for proper customer notification. The services or facilities furnished by the Company may be suspended for failure of the customer to pay any sum due as set forth under Sections concerning discontinuance of service.

A. Billing Period and Charges

1. Bills for telephone service will normally be rendered monthly. Bills may be rendered more frequently, however, when it is considered necessary or advisable by the Company. Bills shall show the period of time covered by the billings, and shall show a clear listing of all charges due and payable, including outstanding amounts in the same customer class that the Company may have chosen to transfer from a customer's prior delinquent account(s). Payment of charges for moves and changes and other Nonrecurring Charges may be required prior to completion.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

A. Billing Period and Charges (Cont'd)

2. Charges for local services and facilities are payable monthly in advance.
3. Special charges, fees, and taxes - An additional charge shall be added to the customer's bill for service, which is equal to the pro rata share of any occupation, franchise, business, license, excise, privilege, or other similar charge or tax, now or hereafter imposed by any municipal taxing body or municipal authority whether by statute, ordinance, law, or otherwise, and whether presently due or to hereafter become due, upon approval of the charge by the Commission.
4. The Company will provide the customer with a breakdown of Local Service Charges at the time service is initially installed or modified, or if requested by the customer, at a reasonable charge. The customer may also choose to receive an itemized breakdown of Local Service Charges monthly or annually which will be provided by the Company at a reasonable charge.
5. Customer bills sent through the United States Postal Service will be in an envelope.

B. Pro Rating of Charges

Charges for service normally furnished on a monthly basis (except those involving a minimum billing period) billed for periods in excess of, or less than, a billing month will be pro rated.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

C. Suspended or Disconnected Service

1. Should service be suspended for nonpayment of charges, it will be restored only as provided in Section 4.5.4 of this Tariff.
2. When service has been disconnected for nonpayment, the service agreement is considered to have been terminated. Re-establishment of service may be made only upon the execution of a new service agreement which is subject to the provisions of this Tariff.

D. Payment Arrangements

The Company may agree to a payment arrangement, whereby an outstanding bill will be paid after the due date of the bill but before the due date of the next bill if a customer so requests. If the customer does not fulfill the terms of such payment arrangements the Company shall have the right to disconnect service. A disconnect notice must be issued prior to termination of service, if one had not been issued before the payment arrangement was executed.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

E. Deferred Payment Plan

1. A deferred payment plan is any arrangement between the Company and a customer in which an outstanding bill will be paid in installments that extend beyond the due date of the next bill. The Company offers deferred payment plans upon customer request in the following cases:
 - a. To any residential customer who has expressed an inability to pay all or part of his or her bill, if that customer has not been issued more than two (2) disconnection notices at any time during the preceding twelve (12) months.
 - b. To any residential customer who expresses an inability to pay that portion of a bill associated with charges for calls placed from combat or war zones, as designated by the federal government, by American military personnel.
2. Deferred payment plans will be based on the following procedures:
 - a. Deferred payment plans entered into due to the customer's inability to pay the outstanding bill in full shall provide that service will not be discontinued if the customer pays current bills and a reasonable amount of the outstanding bill and agrees to pay the balance in reasonable installments until the bill is paid. A payment of not more than 50% of the total deferred amount may be required as a reasonable amount under this paragraph.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

E. Deferred Payment Plan (Cont'd)

2. Deferred payment plans will be based on the following procedures:
(Cont'd)
 - b. For purposes of determining reasonableness under these rules, the following shall be considered:
 - (1). Amount of the delinquent account;
 - (2). Customer's ability to pay;
 - (3). Customer's payment history;
 - (4). Time that the debt has been outstanding;
 - (5). Reasons why debt has been outstanding; and
 - (6). Any other relevant factors concerning the circumstances of the customer.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

E. Deferred Payment Plan (Cont'd)

2. Deferred payment plans will be based on the following procedures: (Cont'd)

- c.** The Company has the right to disconnect service if a customer does not fulfill the terms of a deferred payment plan. The Company will not disconnect service until a disconnect notice has been issued to the customer which indicates the customer has not met the terms of the plan. The notice and disconnection shall be in accordance with rules and regulations applying to discontinuance of service, as discussed in Section 4.5.1 of this Tariff. Under such circumstances the Company may, but is not required to, offer subsequent negotiation of a deferred payment agreement prior to disconnection.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.4 Payment for Service (Cont'd)

E. Deferred Payment Plan (Cont'd)

2. Deferred payment plans will be based on the following procedures:
(Cont'd)
 - d. The Company will not refuse a customer participation in a deferred payment plan on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, or marital status.
 - e. A deferred payment plan may be made by visiting the Company's business office or contacting the Company by telephone.
 - f. If the customer's economic or financial circumstances change substantially during the time of the deferred payment plan, the Company may renegotiate the deferred payment plan with the customer, taking into account the changed economic and financial circumstances of the customer.
 - g. The Company will not enter into a deferred payment agreement with any customer who is lacking sufficient credit or a satisfactory history of payment for previous service when that customer has had service from the Company for no more than three (3) months.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.5 Allowance for Interruptions

In the event a customer's service is interrupted other than by the negligence or willful act of the customer, and it remains out of order for twenty-four (24) hours or longer after being reported to be out of order and after access to the premises is made available, appropriate adjustments or refunds shall be made to the customer. The amount of adjustment or refund shall be determined on the basis of the known period of interruption, generally beginning from the time the service interruption is first reported. The refund to the customer shall be the pro-rata part of the month's flat rate charges for the period of days and that portion of the service facilities rendered useless or inoperative. The refund may be accomplished by a credit on a subsequent bill for telephone service.

4.6.6 Adjustment of Charges for Overbilling and Underbilling

If billings for telecommunications service are found to differ from the Company's lawful rates for the services being purchased by the customer, or if the Company fails to bill the customer for such services, a billing adjustment shall be calculated by the Company. If the customer is due a refund, an adjustment shall be made for the entire period of the overcharges.

If an overcharge is adjusted by the Company within six (6) billing cycles of the bill in error, interest shall not accrue. Unless otherwise provided in this Section, if an overcharge is not adjusted by the Company within six (6) billing cycles of the bill in error, interest shall be applied to the amount of the overcharge at an annual rate of 7%.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.6 Adjustment of Charges for Overbilling and Underbilling (Cont'd)

Interest on overcharges at the annual rate of 7% that are not adjusted by the Company within six (6) billing cycles of the bill in error shall accrue from the date of payment.

If the customer is undercharged, the Company may backbill the customer for the amount which was underbilled. The backbilling is not to exceed six (6) months unless the Company can produce records to identify and justify the additional amount of backbilling. The Company, however, will not disconnect service if the customer fails to pay charges arising from an underbilling more than six (6) months prior to the date the Company initially notified the customer of the amount of the undercharge and the total additional amount due.

If such billing is \$50.00 or more, the Company shall offer the customer a deferred payment plan option for the same length of time as that of the underbilling.

4.6.7 Disputed Bills

- A. In the event of a dispute between a customer and the Company regarding any bill for utility service, the Company shall forthwith make such investigation as shall be required by the particular case, and report the results thereof to the customer and, in the event the dispute is not resolved, shall inform the customer of the complaint procedures of the Commission.
- B. A customer's service shall not be subject to discontinuance for nonpayment of that portion of a bill under dispute pending the completion of the determination of the dispute, but in no event to exceed thirty (30) days. The customer is obligated to pay any billings not disputed. Undisputed amounts are subject to discontinuance of service.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.6 CUSTOMER RELATIONS (Cont'd)

4.6.7 Disputed Bills (Cont'd)

- C. Any customer or applicant for service requesting the opportunity to dispute any action or determination of the Company under the customer service rules as set out in the Company's Tariff shall be given an opportunity for a supervisory review by the Company. If the Company is unable to provide a supervisory review immediately following the customer's request for such review, arrangements for the review shall be made for the earliest possible date. Service shall not be disconnected pending completion of the review. If the customer chooses not to participate in such review or to make arrangements for such review to take place within thirty (30) days after requesting it, the Company may disconnect service, providing notice has been issued under standard disconnect procedures. Any customer who is dissatisfied with the review by the Company will be informed of their right to file a complaint and/or request a hearing before the Commission. The results of the supervisory review must be provided in writing to the customer within thirty (30) days of the review, if requested.

4.6.8 Late Payment Charge

A late payment charge of one and one half percent (1.5%) will be applied to each customer's bill when the previous month's bill has not been paid in full by the billing date. (N)

4.7 LIABILITY OF THE COMPANY

4.7.1 Service Irregularities

- A. The liability of the Company for damages arising out of mistakes, omissions, interruptions, delays, errors, or defects in transmission, or failure or defects in facilities furnished by the Company, occurring in the course of furnishing service or other facilities and not caused by the negligence of the Company in failing to exercise reasonable supervision or to maintain proper standards of maintenance and operation, shall in no event exceed an amount equivalent to the proportionate Local Service Charge to the customer for the period of service during which such service irregularities occur and continue.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.7 LIABILITY OF THE Company (Cont'd)

4.7.1 Service Irregularities (Cont'd)

A. (Cont'd)

However any such mistakes, omissions, interruptions, delays, errors, or defects in transmission or failure or defects in facilities furnished by the Company which are caused or contributed to by the negligence or willful act of the customer, authorized user, or joint user or which arise from the use of customer provided premises equipment shall not result in the imposition of any liability whatsoever upon the Company.

- B. When a service or channel is temporarily surrendered by a customer, at the request of the Company, credit determined as in Paragraph A, above, will be allowed for the entire period surrendered.

4.7.2 Use of Facilities of Other Connecting Carriers

When suitable arrangements can be made, facilities of other connecting carriers may be used in conjunction with the Company's facilities in establishing connections to points not reached by those facilities. Neither this Company nor any connecting carrier participating in a service shall be liable for any act or omission of any other Company or companies furnishing a portion of such service.

4.7.3 Indemnifying Agreement

The Company shall be indemnified and saved harmless by the customer against: claims for libel, slander, or the infringement of copyright arising directly or indirectly from the material transmitted over Company facilities or the use thereof; claims for infringement of patents arising from combining with, or using in connection with, facilities furnished by the Company, and apparatus and systems of the customer; and all other claims arising out of any act or omission of the customer in connection with the facilities provided by the Company.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.7 LIABILITY OF THE Company (Cont'd)

4.7.4 Defacement of Premises

The Company is not liable for any defacement or damage to the premises of a customer resulting from the furnishing of service or the installation, attachment, or removal of the facilities furnished by the Company on such premises, when such defacement or damage is not the result of the sole negligence of the Company or its employees.

4.7.5 Service and Facilities in Explosive Atmospheres

- A. The Company does not guarantee, nor makes any warranty with respect to, service and facilities provided by it for use in an explosive atmosphere. The customer shall indemnify and hold the Company harmless from any and all loss, claims, demands, suits, or other action, or any liability whatsoever, whether suffered, made, instituted, or asserted by the customer or by any other party or person for any personal injury to or death of any person or persons, and for any loss, damage, or destruction of any property, whether owned by the customer or others, caused or claimed to have been caused directly or indirectly by the Company's facilities.
- B. The Company may require each customer to sign an agreement for the furnishing of such service and facilities as a condition precedent to the furnishing of such service and facilities.
- C. The customer shall furnish, install, and maintain sealed conduit with explosive-proof fittings between these facilities and points outside the hazardous area where connection may be made with regular facilities of the Company. The customer may be required to install and maintain these facilities within the hazardous area if, in the opinion of the Company injury or damage to Company employees or property might result from installation or maintenance by the Company.

BASIC LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

6.1 LOCAL EXCHANGE RATES

6.1.1 General

Basic Local Exchange Service is provided by means of station, wire, switching and other facilities, plant and equipment to enable the establishment of telephone communications between stations in the same or different exchanges at monthly rates as set forth below. The facilities, plant and equipment used to provide Basic Local Exchange Service are also used in the furnishing of toll telephone services at rates applicable for such services.

6.1.2 Base Rates

	Residential	Business
1-PARTY (including touch-tone)	\$19.20 (I)	\$23.22

- Rates and conditions for the provision of Key Line and Trunk Service have been moved to Section 8.
- Rates for Semi-public and COCOT measured service have been moved to Section 9.
- Rates for Rotary Line service has been moved to Section 8.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS

8.15 LOW-INCOME PROGRAM

(C)

The Company, as part of its obligations as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, offers a low-income assistance program. This program, Lifeline Assistance, is offered under the terms and conditions provided below:

8.15.1. Lifeline Assistance

A. General

Lifeline Assistance is a non-transferable retail service offering for which qualifying low-income subscribers pay reduced charges, as provided for below. Lifeline Assistance enables eligible subscribers to pay reduced charges for voice telephony service that includes the following services: voice-grade access to the public switched network or its functional equivalent; local usage; access to emergency services; and toll limitation.

B. Regulations

Subscribers are eligible for Lifeline Assistance if:

1. The subscriber's household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or
2. The subscriber, or one or more of the subscriber's dependents or the subscriber's household, receives benefits from at least one of the following qualifying programs:

Medicaid;
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),
formerly known as Food Stamps;
Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
Federal Public Housing Assistance;
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
(LIHEAP);
National School Lunch Program's free lunch program;
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
Low Income Senior Citizens discount plan offered by a
local gas or power company

3. Other eligibility requirements may be established by the Commission.

(C)

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS

8.15 LOW-INCOME PROGRAM (Cont'd)

(C)

8.15.1 Lifeline Assistance (Cont'd)

B. Regulations (Cont'd)

4. Each subscriber to Lifeline Assistance must certify in writing to the Company, under penalty of perjury, that s/he receives benefits under a program outlined in sub-paragraphs (B)(1) through (B)(3), above, and must, on that same document, agree to notify the Company if s/he ceases to participate in the program(s). The certification form shall conform to the requirements described herein, and shall be made available upon request to any subscriber. The Company shall retain all such subscriber certifications in order to furnish proof of subscriber eligibility as may be required from time to time by Universal Service administrators.
5. A subscriber may elect at the time of subscription to Lifeline Assistance to receive toll limitation as part of Lifeline Assistance. "Toll limitation" is a service that allows a subscriber to elect not to allow the completion of outgoing toll calls from the subscriber's residence.
6. Lifeline Assistance will not be disconnected for non-payment of toll charges, unless the Company first demonstrates to the Commission that the Company would incur substantial costs, that the Company offers toll limitation without charge, and that telephone subscribership among low-income subscribers in the Company's service area is greater than or equal to the national subscribership rate for low-income consumers. For purposes of this paragraph, a "low-income consumer" is one with an income below the poverty level for a family of four residing in Georgia. The Company shall follow all applicable notice provisions as established, from time to time, by the Commission, as part of the waiver process, and to implement a waiver, if granted. The Company may reapply for the waiver as necessary.
7. The Company may not collect a service deposit in order to initiate Lifeline Assistance if the qualifying low-income subscriber voluntarily elects toll blocking from the Company, where available or if the qualifying low-income subscriber elects a calling plan that does not distinguish between toll and non-toll calls in its pricing. If toll blocking is unavailable, then the Company may charge a service deposit.

(C)

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MISCELLANEOUS SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS

8.15 LOW-INCOME PROGRAM (Cont'd)

(C)

8.15.1 Lifeline Assistance (Cont'd)

- C. Effective August 1, 2012, the Lifeline credit available to an eligible customer in Georgia is equal to the total of federal support as established by the Federal Communications Commission. The amount of credit will not exceed the charge for local service, which includes the access line, the Subscriber Line Charge and local usage.
- D. The Company shall apply the baseline payments received by the administrator of the federal Lifeline Assistance program to waive the qualifying customer's federal Subscriber Line Charge. The Company shall apply any additional federal support amount to the qualifying customer's basic local exchange service rate.
- E. To be eligible for Lifeline Assistance, qualifying customers must subscribe to a flat-rate basic local exchange service offering that is made available in the Company's service area.
- F. Partial payments that are received from Lifeline customers shall first be applied to local service charges and then to any outstanding toll charges.

(C)

8.15.2 (Deleted)

(D)

(D)

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REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

ALMA TELEPHONE COMPANY (SAC 220344)

ATTACHMENT - LINE 3017

ATTACHMENT REDACTED IN ENTIRETY